

Montgomery County Universal Preschool Implementation Work Group

January 8, 2009

6:00 p.m. to 8:45 p.m.

Council Office Building, 6th Floor Conference Room

100 Maryland Avenue

Rockville, MD 20850

MINUTES

Members present:

Janine Bacquie

Jackie Lichter

Gene Counihan

Kate Garvey

Brad Stewart

Traci McLemore

Julie Bader

Members not present:

Khadra Ayorinde

Lindsey Allard

Jose Alvarez

Jennifer Devine

Clara Floyd

Rolf Grafwallner

Mary Lang

Jane Seffel

The meeting began at 6:08 p.m. with introductions around the group and an overview of the agenda.

The Work Group received discussed the need for Auxiliary Services and received presentations from several professionals that are currently rendering services in Montgomery County to child care providers.

Presenters for Auxiliary Services:

- Beth Molesworth, MCDHHS- Mental Health Consultation Services
 - This program can be access by the public through InfoMontgomery.org.
 - One major program offered by the MCDHHS is the Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation Project which has expanded in the last three years. This program places 40 mental health consultants in 40 different child care facilities and serves approximately 2000 children. The mental health consultant is contacted through *ChildFind* by a teacher or parent.

The mental health professional visits the location, observes the child and offers assistance.

- Mental health consultants are professionals that come from the community.
- This program has been able to reduce the number of expulsions from child care centers by supporting the staff to ensure the child is able to stay at the same setting or is able to attend another quality child care setting.
- Nationally there is a lot of research that shows when a child is expelled from pre-K, schooling in the later years is difficult. No local research has been done to show how this impacts Montgomery County students.
- This program supports children with a mix of disabilities.
- Works with both center based and family based providers.
- Meredith Myers- Family Services Agency
 - This organization has just celebrated 100 years of service in the county and State.
 - There are three programs that provide home visits to assist families and help build families.
 - A parent resource center in Gaithersburg serves approximately 2000 people. This resource center is open to all county residents.
 - This organization focuses on reaching out to isolated families and connecting them to services. The organization believes in school readiness but focuses on social and emotional development. A way to reach isolated families is through home visits which provide families access to resources and services that help parents and children.
 - Parents as Teachers curriculum is used during the home visits and standardizes what is done in the home with each visit.
 - All programs are at no cost to the families.
- Shari Waddy- Families Foremost Program
 - This is a private, non-profit program that offers adult based education classes, health, parent education classes, and GED.
 - The requirements to participate in this program are that you must live in Montgomery County to use services and have a child under 4 years old.
 - Child care is offered to participants and the program provides transportation and case management for all participants.
 - This program serves approx. 250 families and 300 children; 65% latino
 - Currently there is no waitlist for the ESOL and GED classes, although there is a waitlist for home visits.
 - Assessments are given to all children in an attempt to identify any developmental delays.
 - Mentoring programs for women between the ages of 12-24 years old. (MOM- Mothers Offering Maternal Support)
- Melissa Kane- Abilities Network
 - Project ACT- All Children Together- is a program that makes all children feel included in any environment.

- Abilities Network trains providers state wide, but has trained approximately 700 providers in Montgomery County. All training is done on site and is funded through grants. If grants increase, training will increase.
- This program also is able to provide support services for families with either a child or adult with a disability in a home.
- Rolling Access- funding for services for children or adults with a disability. Abilities Network offers rolling access and funding comes from Developmental Disability Association (DDA). Funding maxes out for families up to \$3000.00 per calendar year.
- Abilities Network offers support/mentoring for families that have new diagnosis with ones living with the diagnosis.
- Able to offer IEP Advocacy, college scholarships
- JoAnn Barnes- Child Care Subsidy
 - Review/Approval of 1st Phase Report & Discussion Topics
 - Questions from the group centered around:
 - When working with parents who can't afford child care even with subsidies, how can the group's recommendations ensure services are given to the most at risk children?
 - Suggest professionals in the field of child care subsidies comment on the final report to offer suggestions.
 - What are some standards that families will be connected to quality providers and how is it packaged that it is accessible to child care providers to share with families.
 - How can we communicate to MSDE the service needs of the county?
 - What is the length of time services are provided, full day, touch point, meeting the gap of affordable care?
 - What are the dynamics of the business side of providing child care?

DRAFT REPORT: Group Comments

*** Being on page 4 of the draft report

Budget and Funding Consideration

Initial- include as an outcome that every available dollar is used efficiently.

Long term- the need is not static, when budget deficits exist, education for early childhood should be maintained (as a preamble) always.

- Funding for subsidies should be in line with the recommendations for families paying only 10% of their income for child care

Program Expansion

Initial- include pre-K should be focused on linking new services to where the current level of services are concentrated; for example the Kennedy Cluster.

Long Term- remove ultimately in the first bullet;

- second bullet: state what the domains are; and change “from birth to age **four**” to “from birth to age **five**”.

Professional Development and Training

Initial- The current title is a narrow term, it should be changed to something like “Work Force Development and Preparation of Highly Qualified Staff”.

Longterm- hubs to networks- use the same lingo as the state; substitutes for family child care providers a support system that allows providers to attend training and takes into account the needs of family child care providers.

Advocacy

Change **immediate** to **initial**

- Outreach and information centers to ensure families and service providers know what is happening and the changing environment.
- Explicitly state that the Resource and Referral Center is integral to the success of the program because they provide so many essential services that are necessary for universal pre-K. State clearly that the R&R should be fully funded.

Additional Requests/Recommendations made by the group:

- Examine models of family child care networks to fully understand what it a “hub.”
- What recruiting programs should exist to get teachers from existing 4 year institutions that are ripe for employment into the classrooms?
- Culture and linguistic diversity of providers should be reflected in the training.

NEXT STEPS

Waivers should not be a recommendation unless there is data to support the recommendation. There first needs to be an examination of the current structure of the system to properly recommend whether waivers should be in place and for how long.

Process to access waivers:

1. Assess need of the current system
2. Assess availability of training and assess the number of children in need
3. Make a recommendation as to waivers.

Final recommendation should explicitly state waivers and alternative credit awards are only for pursuing higher education degrees.

Include parent considerations as part of the report.

The timing for the draft report is not pressing, but it should be delivered as soon as possible. Comments should be made by email so the group may approve the final draft at the next meeting- Jan. 22nd.

Items that need more clarification before the group can provide a recommendation.

- Eligibility of Faith Based Programs- need more clarification
- Classroom size- maximum of 20 children in the classroom; juxtaposed with Bridge to Excellence where class sizes can be larger if the school is servicing more than 20. Needs clarification from the state
- What is meant by school readiness?
- Local review panel- what will it look like? Where is the decision making authority for applicants?
- Models for family child care hubs- outstanding issues to be discussed
 - o What other possibilities are out there for family child care providers